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Office of the Director of Central Intelligence

TO: [REDACTED]

FROM: [REDACTED]

SA/DCI  
[REDACTED]

NUMBER OF PAGES 8 (including cover sheet)

REMARKS:

[REDACTED]  
Attached are some additional materials.

Please give me a call when you have a chance. Thanks.

[REDACTED]

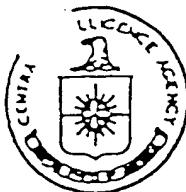
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## Intelligence Report

Office of African and Latin American Analysis

27 January 1995

### Guatemala: Developments In the Bannaca Case

[redacted] claimed that Colonel Julio Roberto Alpírez killed guerrilla commander Efraín Bannaca. We have no firsthand accounts of Bannaca's fate, but have received a number of reports indicating that he was captured alive and killed while in custody by the military. There is significant circumstantial evidence to suggest that Alpírez was at least the intellectual author of Bannaca's death.

[redacted] January 1995, [redacted] reported that [redacted] Guatemalan [redacted]

[redacted] It was known with the senior ranks of the Army that Alpírez had killed Bannaca. In mid-January 1995, a [redacted] confirmed the allegation.

[redacted] December 1994 report [redacted]

[redacted] reported that [redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] said that Bannaca had been captured alive in March 1992, but that he is now dead. [redacted] also stated that Alpírez, then third commander of Military Zone 18 at San Marcos (where Bannaca was held), took charge of the interrogation.

[redacted] reported in [redacted] that Alpírez [redacted] and personally interviewed Bannaca after his capture.

Alpírez has a history of human rights violations. Most notably, [redacted] report of October 1991 indicated that Alpírez was present when US citizen Michael Devine died in June 1990 while undergoing interrogation at a unit under Alpírez's command. The report also characterized Alpírez as an extremely violent individual who had murdered guerrilla prisoners in the past.

We cannot ascertain with certainty, however, that Alpírez was responsible for Bannaca's death. We have no eyewitness reports regarding his role in Bannaca's fate.

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Moreover, in the [redacted] report cited above, [redacted] interrogated Barrios, intelligence officers from the Armed Forces General Staff moved Barrios from San Marcos and he never saw him again [redacted]

[redacted] Barrios was taken away in April 1992 by a D-2 (General Staff Intelligence Directorate) helicopter. Given these discrepancies, it is possible, though unlikely, that the military is offering up Alpírez as a scapegoat [redacted]

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## Intelligence Report

Office of African and Latin American Analysis

27 January 1995

## Guatemala: Chronology on the Bemaca Case (U)

- [redacted] January [redacted] reported that [redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] "it was known within the senior ranks of the Army" that Bemaca was killed by Colonel Julio Roberto Alpírez, third commander of Military Zone 18 (San Marcos) at the time of Bemaca's capture. The government official spoke in mid-January 1995 with [redacted] [redacted] confirmed the allegation. [redacted]
- [redacted] a review of Guatemalan press for March 1992 revealed a number of articles about an encounter between the Army and ORPA guerrillas near Nuevo San Carlos on 12 March 1992—the incident of which involved Bemaca. The articles refer to a guerrilla casualty left on the field, and one paper claims the "leader of the group" was killed. The press reports do not further identify the dead guerrilla. [redacted]
- A 13 January Embassy report says the Guatemalan Human Rights Ombudsman Office on 9 December 1994 submitted its final report on its 30-day investigation into the Bemaca case. The Office concluded that Bemaca was not found to be detained by any Guatemalan officials or the security forces, but that it could not determine whether Bemaca was alive or dead. The Embassy notes that the interviews conducted by the Office appear to have been "very perfunctory and superficial".

[redacted] Bemaca had been captured alive, held and interrogated for about one month, but that he is now dead. [redacted] "the exact method of his elimination is unknown", but that it is unlikely he was dumped at sea by a helicopter due to the cost of such an operation. [redacted] there is no "firsthand evidence" to confirm Bemaca's death. [redacted]

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December 1994 report, [redacted] reported that [redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] said that Baraca had been captured alive in March 1992, but that he is now dead. He stated that the officer who took charge of the interrogation was Colonel Julian Roberto Alpírez, then-third commander of Military Zone 18. [redacted]

[redacted] said that Baraca had been captured alive and believed he was still alive 4-5 weeks later. [redacted] but believed Baraca had been killed. [redacted]

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
Baraca had been slightly wounded and cooperated with his military intelligence (D-2) interrogators—although information about arms caches later proved to be erroneous. In April 1992, Baraca reportedly was taken away in a D-2 helicopter and never seen by the junior officer again. [redacted] had observed military intelligence personnel throw live guerrillas from helicopters into the ocean, and suggested this may have happened to Baraca.

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
the Army has an unspecified number of former guerrillas on its payroll. [redacted] following capture, rebels are given a choice: either collaborate with military intelligence against former comrades or be summarily executed and buried in an unmarked grave.

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
these methods have been used by the Army since the beginning of the insurgency, and continue to be employed despite the attention of human rights activists. [redacted] all captured guerrillas—with the exception of those paraded before the media for propaganda purposes—are interrogated for their intelligence value, and in the majority of cases are then killed and buried. As to Baraca's fate, [redacted]

[redacted]  
[redacted]  
[redacted]  
the Army does not have the rebel leader in custody. [redacted] opinion, however, the Army should turn Baraca, or his remains, over to Jennifer Harbury in order to end the media attention the case is receiving.

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[redacted] reported that an unidentified [redacted] recently related that [redacted] in March 1992 had killed two guerrillas in an armed encounter in Quetzaltenango. One of the dead rebels appeared to have been a commander; he wore a special uniform and new boots, and carried a radio and a weapon. [redacted] could not identify the dead insurgent.

[redacted] and told by the local [redacted] that the dead insurgent was Commandante Everardo.

[redacted] suggests that the Army may have replaced Bannaca's body with the dead insurgent's in an effort to cover up any evidence of torture.

[redacted]  
[redacted] Guatemalan [redacted] obtained information from conversations with others [redacted] rather than from personal experience—stated that Bannaca had been captured in March 1992 and taken to a military camp [redacted] that Bannaca's capture was viewed as a great success by the government because at the time he was the only important indigenous guerrilla leader.

[redacted]  
the Army later realized the case would become a political propaganda issue for the URNG following the February 1993 testimony before the UN Commission on Human Rights in Geneva of two guerrillas who claimed to have seen Bannaca alive inside a clandestine prison before they escaped.

- In May 1994, [redacted] that Minister of Defense Enriquez gave verbal orders to all military zone commanders to identify clandestine cemeteries and purge intelligence-related documents.

[redacted]  
March 1992 [redacted] Bannaca [redacted] guerrilla's capture. [redacted] claimed that Bannaca subsequently

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was taken away by unidentified military intelligence officers from the Armed Forces General Staff; the senior officer claims he never again saw Baracca or heard anything about his whereabouts or status. [REDACTED] reportedly implied to his confidant that Baracca was in good, if not excellent, health at the time of his capture. [REDACTED] expressed the personal opinion that even if Baracca was dead, the government and the military would not turn over his remains because they would then be open to a flood of requests for the remains of other victims of the long and bloody civil war.

- In early October 1993, former Army specialists (senior enlisted troops) Francisco Solobal and Tiburcio Hernandez, both serving a 30-year sentence for their role in the murder of US citizen Michael Devine, publicly claimed they had engaged in Army-run death squad activity and could provide information on clandestine cemeteries and jails. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] the Guatemalan National Defense Staff, worried that such allegations—even if not true—could damage the Army's image at a time when it was making great strides in improving its reputation, sent a senior counterintelligence officer to meet with the imprisoned specialists; these ex-soldiers subsequently admitted to having exaggerated claims of having participated in "death squad" activity. [REDACTED]

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www.english-test.net

in mid-May

accounts of the two URNG members who testified that they saw Barrios alive inside a clandestine camp, reportedly believed the

alive. [REDACTED] reportedly stated that Barnesca was [REDACTED] would neither confirm nor deny the allegation.

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] reported in early March 1992 that Barmaca had been captured and was in good condition despite a light wound to the arm. [REDACTED] claims Barmaca was treated well by the Army.

[REDACTED] further commented that Barmaca continued to cooperate with the Army, and that news of his capture likely would be kept secret by the Army, which might even claim he was killed in action. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In the case of Barmaca's fate, the evidence points to the likelihood he was captured alive in March 1992. However, we have no reliable information to ascertain whether he is still alive and being held in a clandestine military prison. According to the testimony of the two guerrillas escapees, Barmaca was last sighted in July 1992. Harbury claims that he was sighted in the presence of Army troops as recently as several weeks ago by farmers in San Marcos, but we are unable to corroborate this. While the Army would have a strong incentive to keep him alive—for his supposed knowledge of ORPA's structure and personnel—and turn him against his former comrades, the possibility exists that he may have died of battlefield wounds and been buried in an as-yet-unidentified grave. The Army also could have executed Barmaca after it extracted from him whatever useful information it sought. The Army, for its part, remains very tight-lipped about this and other similar cases, and is unlikely to open up to a full inquiry on the subject. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]